

CHARIVARIA.

THE Government has now raised over £36,000,000 in Treasury bills. This only shows what they could achieve with Bills if only there were no House of Lords to interfere.

During the gale last week the Union Jack floating from the flag-staff at the Law Courts was blown to tatters. This has greatly encouraged the wind-bags who offer strenuous opposition each year to the celebration of Empire Day.

No one can deny the pluck of our English Suffragettes, but it is as naught compared with that of the Americans. They are proposing to kiss every member of the legislature without distinction of whiskers until a consent is given to their demands.

Mr. ROOSEVELT has now completed his Big Game tour, and, on his return to Europe, it is evident, the tables will be turned. The ex-President will then be the hunted lion.

Inaccuracies in the City's coat-of-arms are to be removed by the Heralds' College. It had always struck us that the turtles looked absurdly like griffins.

Not the least pleasing feature of Mr. BEECHAM's production

of *Elektra* is the fact that the English artists who take part in it appear under their own names. There was a time when Miss TUBB, who plays one of the maids, would have figured, according to a ridiculous custom, as Signorina Tubbi.

An extension of the Stoke Poges churchyard, made famous by GRAY's "Elegy," was consecrated last week by the Bishop of OXFORD. The offer of a business-like minor poet to extend the poem is being unfavourably considered.

The Express has been complaining of the difficulty of obtaining water at City tea-shops. Has our contemporary tried asking for milk?

Meanwhile the tea-shops are pointing out that it is just as difficult for the general public to obtain tea at

the offices of the Metropolitan Water Board.

A lady's journal suggests as an act of self-denial for Lent that its readers should do without a ball-dress. Another form of self-denial would be to do without everything else except a ball-dress; and something very like this is now being done in the sacred cause of charity at the Palace Theatre.

A Scotch-woman saved a train from destruction last week by waving her red petticoat as a danger signal. This shows one advantage of not being a classical dancer.

It is not often that the male sex beats

TALKS ABOUT OLD LONDON.

(With apologies to "The Evening News.")

"Ah yes," he said, "I remember 1907. I've always had a good memory.

"I was sitting on a bench in Battersea Park conversing with Mr. Thomas Binjies, a Londoner born and bred.

"That was a great year," he continued. "It was good to be alive then."

"Let me see; then you can recollect seeing the sun?" I said.

"Yes, we had some sun in 1907. Very pretty it was too, shining on the chimney pots and warming the sooty air. We used to get about dry-shod in those days."

"And they tell me that there were hansoms then."

"Oh, yes, that's right. It was before the days of these here taxis. Hansoms everywhere, there were. Bright young fellows on the box and smart spanking horses in the shafts. There are a few left, I'm told, but they're ruins. Nothing to what they used to be."

"And omnibuses were drawn by horses, too?"

"That's right. I've seen them with these eyes."

"How strange it all is!" I said. "Tell me some more."

"Well, there's my father. He ain't what you call an old man, but he remembers the Emment before they had the trams running along it."

"That was in the days of the penny steamers, wasn't it?"

"Yes, that's so. And some days, when his head is clear, he has a sort of dim recollection of London before *The Daily Mail* was started. But he can't be quite sure whether it was in his time or my grandfather's."

This last glimpse into the dark ages was too overwhelming, and hurriedly excusing myself I bade farewell to this wonderful living link with the past—the man whose father remembered London without *The Daily Mail*!

"OXFORD v. CAMBRIDGE.
ENGLISHMEN'S SPLENDID VICTORY."

Manchester Evening News.

Can this have any reference to the Rhodes Scholars at Oxford?



HALF-MOURNERS.

Distant Relative of Deceased. "GIE US A BIT BIRL ROON' THE TOON JUST TO SEE THE EIGHTS AFORÉ YE GANG BACK."

the other in the matter of Fashions, but, as regards the *Chantecler* mode, we would point out that men have been wearing billycock hats for years.

Mr. McKENNA's explanation as to *The Invincible's* gun mountings has not satisfied Lord CHARLES BERESFORD. In the opinion of the Member for the Navy Mr. McKENNA is making mole-hills out of mountings.

A man was charged last week at Bow Street with breaking a window of the House of Lords. It is scarcely surprising that the public should be getting impatient at the delay in abolishing the Upper Chamber.

In Election Time.

Our fathers used to lie in Four-Posters. We lie in fifty score.

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

"FREE-FOODER."—I have it on the authority of the Monagasque Vice-Consul at Baden-Baden that offal is the habitual food of the so-called working-classes in the Protected Fatherland. At the same time I am assured that it is the very best offal.

"DUBIOUS."—You say you cannot make up your dear mind whether you would sooner be made an hereditary peer without a veto, or a life-peer with one. This is indeed a horny dilemma; but you must bear up. After all, it is just possible that you mayn't be made either.

"RADICAL."—Of course, if you got into Parliament by telling your constituents that the hereditary principle must be done away with, and now find that your leader hopes to go shortly to the country with the cry, "The hereditary character of the House of Lords must be preserved," you are certainly in a very awkward position.

"PRO-SPECTIVE PEER."—If you have made it quite clear to the PRIME MINISTER that you are prepared to become a Peer, under any conditions, even the most humiliating, you can do nothing further for the present. Unless, perhaps, you might join the Radical cave, and be so nasty to him that he might have to shove you into "another place" to get rid of you.

"CAVEAT EMPTOR."—No, I cannot recommend Asquith Guaranteed Stock. Why not try Rubbers?

"ONE OF THE GREAT MAJORITY."—It is a very difficult case. As you say, if the Nationalists had carried their conscientious approval of Tariff Reform to the point of supporting Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN'S amendment, instead of merely abstaining from voting, there would have been a majority of 50 against the Government. And the same thing may be said, prospectively, about the Budget. Your best course would be to go about the country saying that the People were never consulted on either of these two issues, but simply on the Lords' Veto. Only I don't advise you to start on this tack in the "Great Industrial Centres" of the North.

"PRO-TIBET."—Yes, you are quite right about the DALAI LAMA. He is a biped. With two more legs he could have run away much quicker.

"SPECULATOR."—I cannot account for the boom in Rubber, unless it is to be explained by the wet season causing a run on goloshes.

"PARISIEN."—I, too, have been reading M. RAYMOND RECOULY'S *En Angleterre*, and have remarked that, after long residence in England and much intelligent observation of our manners, he still labours under the impression that an English gentleman habitually dines *en smoking*. My poor friend, it hurts me to destroy one of the most cherished illusions of your countrymen, but we don't dine in a "smoking" (whatever that may be) any more than you do in the Bois in pyjamas.

O. S.

The Perils of the Country.

A correspondent writes to *The Reading Mercury*:—

"SIR,—May I ask (through your Paper) whether something cannot be done to prevent men in the village of Tilehurst from firing off guns in cottage gardens, too near the cottage entrances? I was frightened yesterday morning while in my bedroom by witnessing a man in the next garden firing off a gun perilously near (although in the opposite direction) to the place where I should in a few moments later have been standing in my garden."

A pretty near thing, that.

"East Lothian farmers had a great dinner on Friday last. But it was Hamlet without the Ghost. Mr. Harry Hope, M.P., was absent."

Scottish Farmer.

Probably the Ghost was away at Westminster counting two on a division.

MR. PUNCH'S REPERTORY THEATRE.

No. I.—GLOOM.

A DRAMA OF MODERN LIFE.

Characters.

JOHN WILSON.

JOSIAH MERRIDEW, *Master of the Workhouse.*THE REV. ARTHUR NASH, *Chaplain to the Workhouse.*

NANCY ARDEN.

GRACE MERRIDEW.

ACT I.

SCENE—A Churchyard not far from the Workhouse. As the curtain draws up John Wilson and Nancy Arden are discovered inspecting the gravestones.

Wilson. Here is another, Nancy. Listen. (He reads the inscription on a gravestone.) "Beneath this stone is interred all that was mortal of Abraham Ballinger, Alderman and Justice of the Peace. Venerated and loved by all who knew him, a good husband and a kind father, he died on April 2nd, 1909, in the 75th year of his age. Go thou and do likewise." Now I knew that man—you knew him, too, Nancy and I have no hesitation in saying that the operative part of the inscription is a lie from beginning to end. He drove his wife into a lunatic asylum by his brutality; his son and his daughter rightly hated him, and he sanded an absolutely incalculable amount of sugar in his grocer's shop. And then he dies, and this mendacious record is carved for the deception of posterity. Pah!

Nancy. Oh, come, John! Poor old Uncle Abraham wasn't so bad as all that.

Wilson. Yes, he was, and much worse, too. But it's all part of the system on which this life of ours is based. I've made up my mind to expose that system. I mean to crush it. I'm going to begin on it directly, and I want to feel that your love and your sympathy are there to sustain me.

Nancy. You can be sure of me, John; but what do you mean to do?

Wilson. Do you see that Workhouse? (He points off R.) Well, that is the symbol of the system, the embodiment of all the maddening hypocrisy of existence. I shall introduce myself into it as a tramp, learn its ghastly secrets and publish them to the world. Then the system will come to an end.

Nancy. Take care, John. That's what father used to say many years ago.

Wilson. Your father, Nancy, is one of nature's noblemen, but a sad sufferer.

Nancy. He was a powerful man once, and very cheerful; but that was before he set himself up against mother's system of household management. He didn't struggle long, and you can see for yourself what a wreck he became. If you'll take my advice you'll leave systems alone, John.

Wilson. Never! How could I look you, or, for the matter of that, myself, in the face if I did? And now embrace me, and, for a time, farewell.

[They embrace. The strains of the "Dead March in Saul" are heard from a distant German band, and the curtain falls.]

ACT II.

The Master's Room in the Workhouse. At the back is a door leading into the Casual Ward. Josiah Merridew is seated at a table with a large ledger open in front of him. Two attendants bearing a stretcher are passing through from the Casual Ward to a door on the right.

Merridew (to the attendants). Come, come, not so much hurry, please. I haven't made the entry yet. (They stop.) Whom have you got there?

First Attendant. Old Abel Skillicorne, Sir.

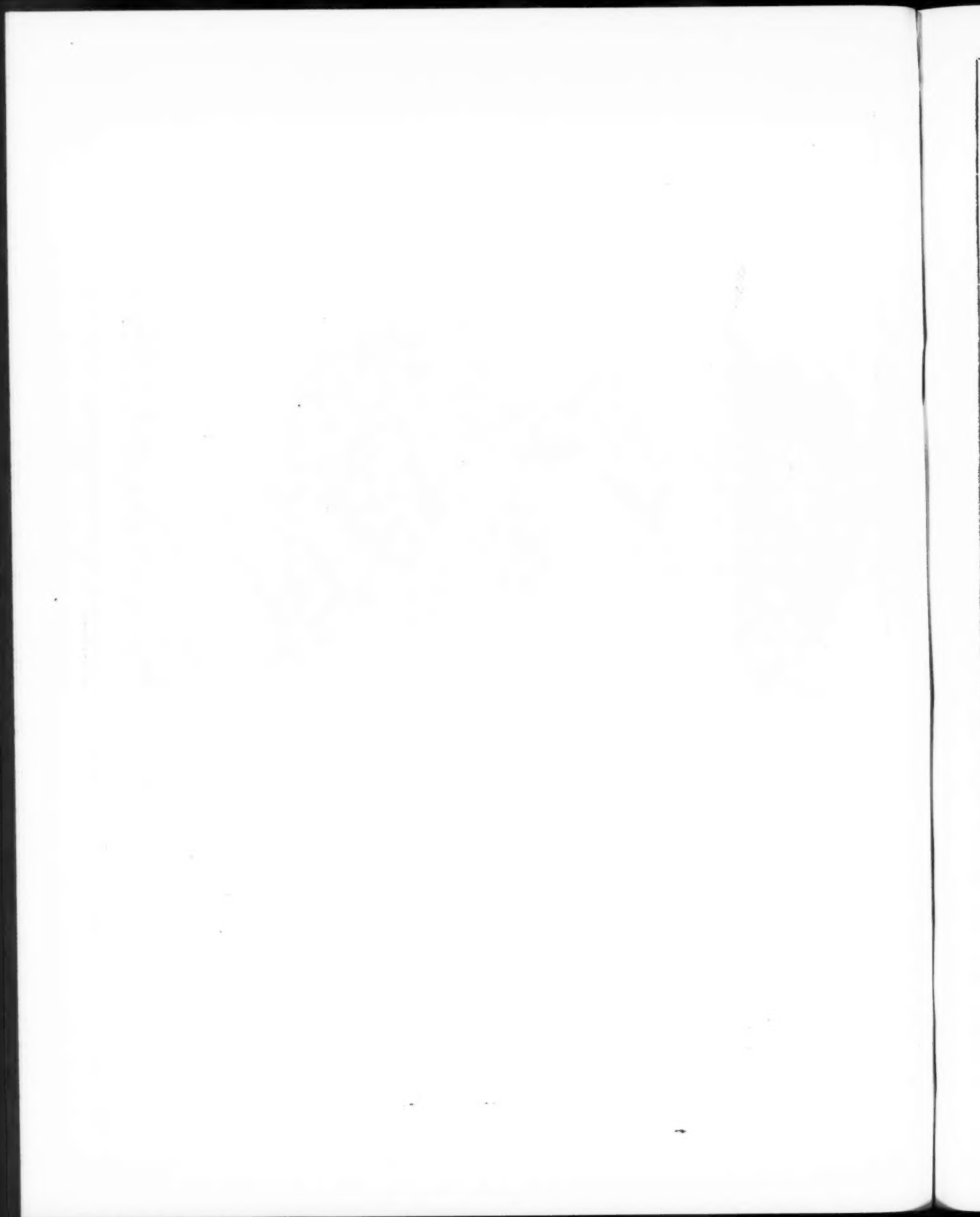


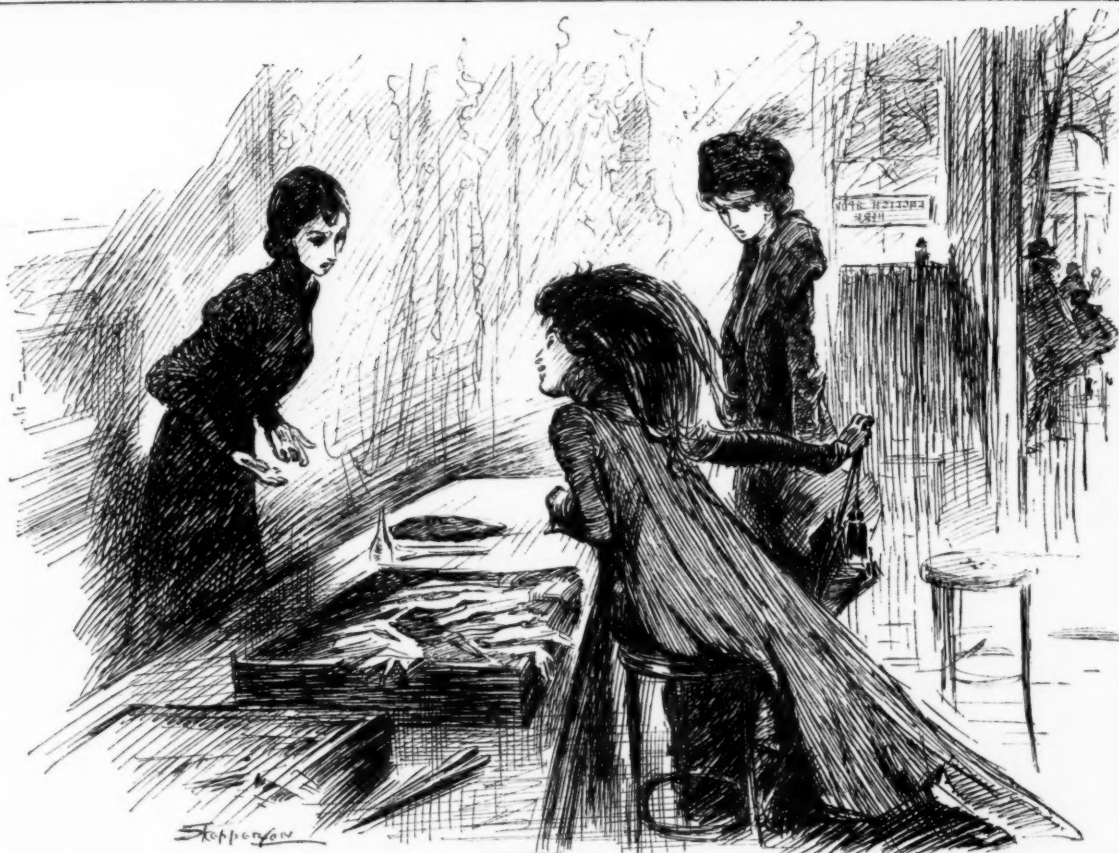
TOO YOUNG TO DIE.

THE PUP. "PLEASE DO NOT CUT ME OFF WITH MY LIFE'S WORK STILL UNDONE."

MR. REDMOND. "WELL, HOW LONG DO YOU WANT FOR IT?"

THE PUP. "ABOUT THREE MONTHS."





English Lady (coming to the rescue of her countryman who has entered a Paris shop on the strength of the notice, "English spoken here," but can get nothing out of the Attendant). "QUI DONO PARLE ANGLAIS?"

Attendant. "MAIS, MADAME, LES ACHETEURS ANGLAIS."

Merridew. Oh, so he's gone at last (enters the name in his ledger). Let me see, that makes the tenth to-day. Well, well, in the midst of life, you know. You can carry him out. (They do so as the Chaplain enters R.) Ah, good morning, Mr. Nash. Can we have ten minutes or a quarter of an hour of your time to-day, to-morrow and the next day? I really don't like to trouble you, but we must get these funerals done.

Mr. Nash. Well, if I must, of course I must, though I'm bound to say it's not a job I care for. I can just do it for you to-day at four, between the School Management Committee and Mrs. Hanson's garden-party.

Merridew. That'll do very nicely. Hallo, who's this?

[An attendant enters, escorting Wilson disguised as a tramp and heavily handcuffed.

The Attendant. He's as deaf as a post, Sir, and as I couldn't make him hear I thought it best to slip the bracelets on him.

Merridew. Quite right, quite right. No doubt a very dangerous fellow. (To Wilson) Now, Sir, you listen to me. You've not come here to amuse yourself. You'll have an hour under the pump first, and then we'll see what we can do with you. Do you hear?

Wilson. No, Sir. I am deaf—a mining accident two years ago.

Merridew. That makes it worse. Take him away.

Enter Grace Merridew.

Grace. Father.

Merridew. Well, dear.

Grace. Don't send that man away. There is something in his face that bespeaks my pity. [She smiles at Wilson.

Merridew. Grace, I will not have you smiling here. The atmosphere of this place must be maintained.

Grace. Help me, Mr. Nash. You, who are a Christian clergyman, must feel—

Mr. Nash. Grace, I can do nothing for you. You must obey your father.

Merridew. There—you hear what Mr. Nash says. (To Attendant) Take him away at once.

[Wilson is removed struggling, Grace faints.

Mr. Nash. I think I will fetch some smelling salts.

Merridew. Oh, never mind. She always faints about this time.

[He continues to make entries in his ledger.

Curtain.

ACT III.

We merely sketch this Act. The scene is laid in the padded room occupied by Wilson. He is mercilessly beaten by attendants and dies just as Grace enters with an order of release. She dies on seeing what has happened; and finally Nancy, entering through the window to rescue Wilson, discovers the attendants gazing at the two dead bodies, and also dies.

Merridew, representing the triumphant system, enters the deaths in his ledger and arranges with Mr. Nash for the funerals.

AFTERNOON SLEEP.

["In the afternoon they came unto a land
In which it seemed always afternoon."]

I AM like Napoleon in that I can go to sleep at any moment; I am unlike him (I believe) in that I am always doing so. One makes no apology for doing so on Sunday afternoon—the apology indeed should come from the others, the wakeful parties. . . .

"Uncle?"

"Margery."

"Will you come and play wiv me?"

"I'm rather busy just now," I said with closed eyes. "After tea."

"Why are you raver busy just now? My baby's only raver busy sometimes."

"Well then, you know what it's like; how important it is that one shouldn't be disturbed."

"But you *must* be beturbed when I ask you to come and play wiv me."

"Oh, well . . . what shall we play at?"

"Trains," said Margery eagerly.

When we play trains I have to be a tunnel. I don't know if you have ever been a tunnel? No; well, it's an over-rated profession.

"We won't play trains," I announced firmly, "because it's Sunday."

"Why not because it's Sunday?"

(Oh, you little pagan!)

"Hasn't Mummy told you all about Sunday?"

"Oh, yes, Maud did tell me," said Margery casually. Then she gave an innocent little smile. "Oh, I called Mummy Maud," she said in pretended surprise. "I quite *fought* I was upstairs!"

I hope you follow. The manners and customs of good society must be observed on the ground floor where visitors may happen; upstairs one relaxes a little.

"Do you know," Margery went on with the air of a discoverer, "you mustn't say 'prayers' downstairs. Or 'corsets.'"

"I never do," I affirmed. "Well, anyhow I never will again."

"Why mayn't you?"

"I don't know," I said sleepily.

"Say prehaps."

"Well — *prehaps* it's because your mother tells you not to."

"Well, 'at's a *silly* fing to say," said Margery scornfully.

"It is. I'm thoroughly ashamed of it. I apologise. Good night." And I closed my eyes again. . . .

"I fought you were going to play with me, Mr. Bingle," sighed Margery to herself.

"My name is *not* Bingle," I said, opening one eye.

"Why isn't it Bingle?"

"The story is a very long and sad one. When I wake up I will tell it to you. Good night."

"Tell it to me now."

There was no help for it.

"Once upon a time," I said rapidly, "there was a man called Bingle, Oliver Bingle, and he married a lady called Pringle. And his brother married a lady called Jingle; and his other brother married a Miss Wingle. And his cousin remained single . . . That is all."

"Oh, I see," said Margery doubtfully. "Now will you play with me?"

How can one resist the pleading of a young child?

"All right," I said. "We'll pretend I'm a little girl, and you're my mummy, and you've just put me to bed. . . . Good night, mummy dear."

"Oh, but I must cover you up." She fetched a table-cloth, and a pram-cover, and *The Times*, and a handkerchief, and the cat, and a doll's what-I-mustn't-say-downstairs, and a cushion; and she covered me up and tucked me in. "Ere, 'ere, now go to sleep, my darling," she said, and kissed me lovingly.

"Oh, Margie, you dear," I whispered.

"You called me 'Margie'!" she cried in horror.

"I meant 'Mummy.' Good night."

One, two, three seconds passed rapidly.

"It's morning," said a bright voice in my ear. "Get up."

"I'm very ill," I pleaded; "I want to stay in bed all day."

"But your dear uncle," said Margery, inventing hastily, "came last night after you were in bed, and stayed 'e night. Do you see? And he wants you to sit on his chest in bed and talk to him."

"Where is he? Show me the boulder."

"Ere he is," said Margery, pointing at me.

"But look here, I can't sit on my own chest and talk to myself. I'll take the two parts if you insist, Sir HERBERT, but I can't play them simultaneously. Not even IRVING—"

"Why can't you play vem simrul-aleously?"

"Well, I can't. Margie, *will* you let me go to sleep?"

"Nope," said Margery, shaking her head.

"You should say, 'No, thank you, revered and highly respected Uncle.'"

"No *hank* you, Mr. Cann."

"I have already informed you that my name is not Bingle; and I have now to add that neither is it Cann."

"Why never is it Cann?"

"That isn't grammar. You should say, 'Why can it not either?'"

"Why?"

"I don't know."

"Say prehaps."

"No, I can't even say prehaps."

"Well, say I shall understand when I'm a big girl."

"You'll understand when you're a big girl, Margery," I said solemnly.

"Oh, I see."

"That's right. Now then, what about going to sleep?"

She was silent for a moment, and I thought I was safe. Then

"Uncle, just tell me—why was 'at little boy crying vis morning?"

"Which little boy?"

"Ve one in 'e road."

"Oh, that one. Well, he was crying because his Uncle hadn't had any sleep all night, and when he tried to go to sleep in the afternoon—"

"Say prehaps again."

My first rejected contribution! I sighed and had another shot. "Well, then," I said gallantly, "it must have been because he hadn't got a sweet little girl of three to play with him."

"Yes," said Margery, nodding her head thoughtfully, "at was it."

A. A. M.

ONE OF THE OLD GUARD.

I WROTE the other week of my poor friend, the New Pangloss, as I called him. And now I hear that another friend has gone to the Land of Shadows.

He was one of those dear men who never pick up a new idea or use a new phrase. Sometimes one wonders whether one admires most those determined conventionalists or the acquisitive modernists who are picking up wrinkles all the time. This friend, now dead, certainly was a magnificent example of his type. I will wager that during the past twenty years of his life he never referred to the French in any other way than as "our lively neighbours." He never entered a hackney-carriage without asking if there was "room for a little one"; he never opened the door for a guest without saying, "age before honesty"; he never remarked upon his last night's repose without saying he had "slept the sleep of the just," or parted with a friend without saying, "be good."

If you asked him how he was, he said, "right as a trivet," although he had no more idea than you or I what a trivet is. He always told children that "stinging - nettles do not sting this month," and that "fingers were made before forks," and it never rained hard but he mentioned that it was good weather for ducks.

In short he never disappointed the ear, and I am inclined to think that a man of whom this can be said is, in the sum of things, more to be desired than your most original and tickling wit. He was a human cuckoo-clock. And now he is dead—run down—and I shall mourn him as another lost landmark, another solid, tangible link with Simplicity and the Past.

WHY READ AT ALL?

FOR BUSY MEN.—THE WORLD'S GREATEST AUTHORS TAKEN IN AT A GLANCE.—VI.—MR. WILLIAM LE QUEUX.



IN THE SMOKE-ROOM AT CLARIDGE'S.



THE ACCUSATION.



THE PEACE OF EUROPE IN JEOPARDY—DIPLOMACY TO THE RESCUE.



THE SLEUTH-HOUND AGAIN.



A MONARCH'S JOY (THRONE-ROOM AT CLARIDGE'S).



THE WAR-CLOUD DISPERSED.

BLANCHE'S LETTERS.

A REST CURE.

Rippindorf-auf-Schneegebirge.

DEAREST DAPHNE,—I'm just beginning to buck up a bit, since coming here with Bosh and Wee-Wee. My dear, I was so prostrate and my nerves were in *such* a state after my election exertions that Sir Henry Kiddem said I must go away *at once* and have *perfect rest*. Josiah said he'd take me away next day; but dear Sir Henry, who's the best doctor that ever felt a pulse and understands people's constitutions *à merveille*, said emphatically, *No*; in my present state I must be *quite* away from those dearest to me. So Josiah didn't come.

All of us election victims here are agreed never to mention votes or polls or beastly politics again as long as we live. Poor dear Norty has got to leave us to take his seat for Houndsditch; but he's been doing his best while here to forget that there is such a place.

Oh, my dearest and best! you don't know all that can be got out of life till you ski! It's sailing on the sea, and flying in the air, with a *heavenly* something added that doesn't belong to either. I'm having lessons from Count Olaf Hesseljof, the best amateur ski-er that even *Norway* has ever produced, and he says my progress is simply *screaming* and that my grace and activity are—and so on. He's distinctly inclined to be a darling, pale and fair with curly flaxen hair and an awfully good figure. Norty says he's an "anæmic ass" and that his ski-ing is "flukey"; but, *entre nous*, Norty never got his ski-legs; they were buried in the snow and he couldn't find them—hence his bitterness. I said to Olaf yesterday that ski-ing teaches one how it feels to be an angel, and he told me I needn't be ski-ing to feel that. He talks the *prettiest* English, not exactly broken, only a teeny bit chipped.

There's a fly in the ointment, however. Josiah keeps on writing to know if I'm stronger and if the "mountain quiet" is doing my nerves good, and if he may come. What time have I to answer letters, I'll ask you, with ski-ing and bob-sleighing all day, torchlight skating in the evening, and dancing and pillow-fights nearly all night? I've managed to send him a few words, however, telling him I'm a weeny bit better, but that my nerves won't yet stand the excitement of seeing my dear ones. There's no doubt this place has a wonderfully curative effect on those suffering from *strain*, as most of us have been. Fluffy Thistle-down broke down quite suddenly while she and Thistle-down had a big house party of relatives with them, and had to leave him to see to them, and come off to this place in a life-and-death hurry. And now she

seems *quite* recovered, and is bob-sleighing with Jack Hurlingham all day.

Talking of bob-sleighs, you should see Princess Poppolinsky's (*autrefois* Clytie Vandollarbilt)! It's all of ebony and silver, with the Poppolinsky cipher and coronet wherever there's room for it, guided by a big moujik or Tartar or something, with the cipher and coronet again on the front of his fur cap, and Clytie herself in *such* sables, Daphne, that I hardly dare to look at them for fear I should be tempted to slay her. There's an aloofness and chilliness about her, now she's a Highness, that I find quite delicious. I said to her the other day: "I suppose you came to the Schneegebirge, my dear, from a fellow-feeling,—because it *also* is cool and a highness!"

I don't see much of Stella Clackmannan. Since her arrival a week ago with her broom and stones, she's given herself up to practising her curling like mad for the Bonspiel. She doesn't want to lose her rep. as the best woman curler of the day. She's already got "curling face," which, Norty says, isn't as nice as curling hair.

Oh, my dear, such fun! Bob Aislabie, M.F.H., has actually chucked her beloved hunting for a week and joined us. Of course, Lord Ninian follyott has come in her wake, though he doesn't go in for any of the sports and can't stand the cold. He still says they're engaged, and she says they're not. Bob's for ever tobogganing down all the most horribly dangerous slopes she can find, while Lord Ninny, wrapped up to the eyes and shivering, looks on, bleating out: "Tweetie, you cruel girl! You'll break your neck and my heart! Dearest, do be careful!" And Bob shouts back: "Shut up, Ninny, and clear out, you blitherin' little idiot!"

C'est un couple comme il n'y en a point.

I gave such a perfectly lovely Snow Picnic last week. Everyone said it was *immensely* well done and quite *quite*. We all dressed up as Eskimos and pretended to be an Arctic Expedition. I borrowed a lot of dogs, and *tried* to get some *penguins*, but Bosh says they're not necessary at the North Pole, and we set off with sledges and everything *en règle*. Oh, it was the *squakiest* affair! Olaf looked most awfully business-like; the Arctic get-up suited him right down to the snow. We pretended to make all sorts of discoveries, and Norty said he should send our *data* to Copenhagen! We had lunch in the snow; the cham was splendidly *frappé*, of course. "But the worst of it is," said Bob Aislabie, "all the *grub's frappé*, too!"

After lunch we'd a glorious snow-balling rag, and just as we were think-

ing of going back we missed that absurd Wee-Wee. We had to explore in earnest *then*, and we'd all got into quite a nervy state before she was found ever so much higher up the mountain, stuck fast, and unable to go up or come down. It was local colour again. She wished to imagine how it would be to be lost on the mountains, that she might write about it; and she got her wish, and something over; while as for *local colour*, my dear, her poor little nose was *blue* with cold and terror! Bosh was angry with her. He said she'd end by going to look for first-hand impressions at the bottom of a crevasse, and *then* they wouldn't be any use to her!

Adieu, *chérie*. Come and learn to ski.

Ever thine, BLANCHE.

The Latest Fashionable Cure.

"High above the heads of all in the narrow gallery unbroken lines of pe rasses ran along the dark oak sides of the House beneath the great stained glass windows."—*Evening News*. Exercise, that's the best thing for the figure.

"The spot at which the accident occurred runs parallel with the sea."—*The Scotsman*.

See above. The most energetic spot we have heard of lately.

Tales of the Old Gaiety.

"The Church and the stage have but little in common, but St. George's late choirmaster, Meyer Lutz, composed many vivacious airs for the old Gaiety, where for a considerable period he conducted the orchestra. It was there, also, that the first Archbishop of Westminster, Cardinal Wiseman, was enthroned."

Pall Mall Gazette.

Hardly the place, we should have said.

"As a result of a recent conference in London a gigantic international map of the earth is planned on a scale of a million kilometres to the centimetre."—*Continental Daily Mail*.

This works out at about one and a half million miles to the inch. It scarcely seems worth while.

"The above article will appear every Friday in the 'Suffolk Chronicle and Mercury,'" is an announcement made by that paper. In a year or so the superstition that Friday is an unlucky day should be firmly established.

From a bookseller's catalogue:—

"COD LIVER OIL.—A Comparative Study of the Nose upon the Nutrition of Enormal and Tuberculous Pigs."

We always thought there was something sinister in cod liver oil.

From a placard:

"The Sphere HAS NO PEER."

Cheer up, Mr. SHORTER; there's hope yet.



Hostess. "PROFESSOR, WHAT IS MRS. RAYMOND'S NUMBER IN HANOVER STREET?"

Professor. "LET ME SEE—ER—I FORGET FOR THE MOMENT, BUT HER DOOR-SCRAPER'S IN G SHARP!"

MALADIE DE SIÈCLE.

O SONS of the new generation
 Athirst for inordinate thrills;
 O daughters, whose love of sensation
 Is shown in your frocks and your frills—
 Come, faithfully answer my queries
 If you would completely assuage
 The passionate craving that wearies
 Both sinner and sage.

Has ISEN no power to excite you?
 Can't MAETERLINCK make you applaud?
 Do dancers no longer delight you,
 Who wriggle about à la MAUD?
 Are you tired of the profile of AINLEY?
 The tender falsetto of TREE?
 Do you envy each bonnet insanely
 That harbours a bee?

Is the METENIKOFF treatment a failure?
 Do you weep when you miss your short putts?
 Have you ceased with enjoyment to hail your
 Diurnal allowance of nuts?
 Are you bored by the leaders of SPENDER?
 Or cloyed by the pathos of CAINE?
 Do you find that "The Follies" engender
 A feeling of *gêne*?

Are you sick of Sicilian grimaces?
 Unattracted by Chantecler hats?

Are you weary of Marathon races
 And careless in choosing your spats?
 Are you jaded with aeroplaning
 And sated with social reform?
 Apathetic alike when it's raining
 And when it is warm?

Do you shy at the strains that are sober?
 Does WAGNER no longer inflame?
 Do you find that the music of AUER
 And ELGAR is equally tame?
 Do you read without blushing or winking
 The novels of ELINOR GLYN?
 Do you constantly hanker, when rinking,
 For draughts of sloe gin?

If I am correct in divining
 The tortures you daily endure,
 Don't waste any time in repining,
 But try this infallible cure:
 With the sharpest of musical *plectra*
 Go pluck at your soul till it's raw;
 In a word, go and witness *Elektra*—
 Give up the jig-saw.

According to *The Daily Dispatch*, the author of *Don Juan* had a daughter called "Ada Sole, who became Countess of Lovelace." There is, of course, authority for this in *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage* :—

"Ada! sole daughter of my house and heart."



REVENGE.

Shareholder in Rubber Company (who has had a narrow share). "GO ON! WEAR YOUR D—D TYRES OUT!"

THE VETO.

By MR. ROBERT BART KENNEDY-BLATCHFORD.

A PALE-FACED throng sit in the Parliament House. They are in conclave. They are obsessed by a burden. A heavy burden. They strive to throw off the fetters that nullify their legislation. Their legislation.

What fetters them? In two words I answer, The Veto. It presses on them, and, through them, on the People. To the People the Veto is the question of the hour. The all-important question.

Men who think, men who toil, men who toil not, ay, even the little children of the slums, on each the Veto presses like an incubus. It presses sore.

Away with it! And with it the Lords. The Lords must go. The

country is too full of Lords. They crowd out the down-trodden and the hungry. Because of the Lords the bitter struggle for the scanty crusts of life grows ever more severe, ever more fierce.

The crusts are few. The Lords are many. Therefore must they go. Why? Because it is decreed. It is decreed by the People.

Where must the Lords go? It does not matter. There are so many places. The choice is infinite.

The objective of the Lords may be left to the future. The future can take care of itself. The Lords can take care of themselves. They always do.

Who are the Lords?

They are born in the purple. With silver spoons,

Silver spoons in their mouths!

They are a race apart.

They are the back-numbers in the Marathon of Life.

What is Life? What is a Marathon?

It does not matter. The Lords must go.

If there were no Veto there would be no Lords. It is essential to abolish the Lords. Therefore it is first essential to abolish the Veto. The one thing is a corollary of the other.

The Lords must go. They must be ended . . . [So must this. Ed.]

THE TURN OF THE WHEEL.

[It is stated that the bicycle is to become fashionable again.]

TIME was (I do adore that phrase)

When, keen as mustard, I bestrode
The metalled horse of modern days
And took the king's high road.

A very bird, adown the slope
With lifted feet I'd lightly drop,
Or toil till I was heliotrope
To reach some mountain-top.

Yet, over and above the speed
I liked the splendour and the fuss
About my old velocipede,
My tin Bucephalus

The reverence of the hind to win,
To pause, a Person of account,
While ostlers hurried from the inn
To hold my prancing mount;

To flabbergast the village hens;
Against the hedge-row (neatly spiked)
To urge pedestrians by tens—
These were the parts I liked.

Now it is otherwise; a wail,
A whirl of dust that makes you blink—
The road-hog passes in a gale
And leaves behind his stink.

He is the undisputed lord
Of whatsoe'er may roll or run;
By him the farmer's carts are bored,
By him the hens fordome.

Not TURPIN in his palmy prime,
Hero of ale-house host and wench,
Achieved a kingship so sublime
(Also he lacked the stench).

Therefore, I say, I do not yearn
To mount the pump-inflated hack,
To grip the wobbling bars and turn
Blue in the face or black.

I that of old was "upper crust,"
To whom the yokel used to cringe
In days when he imbibed his dust
Without that petrol tinge;

Am I to hear his loud guffaw,
To feel, when shaving past his spine,
The transference of the ancient awe
From me to motor-swine? EVOL.



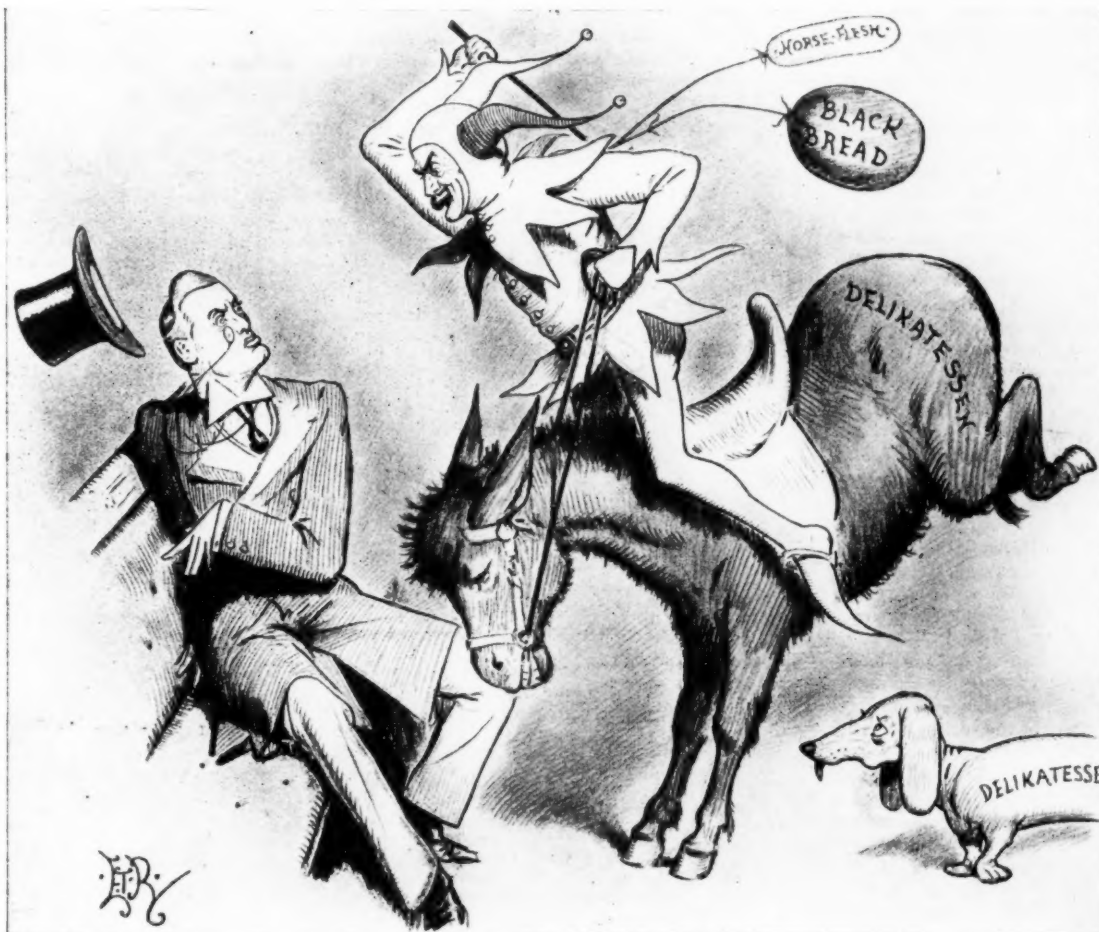
THE ALBERT HALL ORACLE.

PRIEST. "THEY'RE COMPLAINING THAT YOUR UTTERANCES ARE AMBIGUOUS."

THE ORACLE. "WELL, THAT'S ONE OF MY 'SAFEGUARDS'!"

ESSENCE OF PARLIAMENT.

EXTRACTED FROM THE DIARY OF TOBY, M.P.



MORE "DELICACIES" OF DEBATE.

In response to a polite request from Mr. Austen Chamberlain "to prove any single statement he made on the Fiscal Question during the Election," Mr. Lloyd George showed that Mr. Chamberlain had omitted very vital words from a quotation, and proceeded to lay about him pretty freely. He incidentally introduced some fresh items from the appetising Protectionist menu of the German working-classes. To the famous "horse-flesh" and "black-bread" he added donkeys and dogs!

House of Commons, Monday, Feb. 21.
—House thronged in anticipation of what is spoken of as the PREMIER'S momentous announcement on course of business. Four o'clock fixed for commencing work. Every bench on floor, side galleries, and over clock occupied. As at Epsom a dog sometimes casually crosses course, with field in sight, so a few laggard Members seized on the opportunity to be sworn in. This interlude, unlike the Derby diversion, delayed debate on Address, which was further postponed by debate on Standing Order which forbids Peers to meddle with Parliamentary election.

House in quaint moment of magna-

nimity resolved to annul the Standing Order. Been debated for years; whenever division taken, majority mustered against it. Now it goes without even a division.

SARK sees in it the touch of nature that makes the whole world kin. Just as in the good old time gentlemen condemned to death, halting on their journey to Tyburn, had pressed on their acceptance the flowing bowl, so noble lords destined to decapitation in respect of legislative powers have this century-old ban removed. JOCKEY OF NORFOLK may at next General Election indulge in his passion for correspondence with "my dear PROFUMO," none daring to make him afraid.

Momentous occasion aforesaid turned out to be surprisingly dull. Possibly this natural result of overstrained expectation. Certainly PRINCE ARTHUR, who led the attack, was decidedly prosy. Nor did light of battle flash from the PREMIER'S eye. Contrary to habit he brought down mass of MS., from which at times he closely read. Overloaded with detail, Members had difficulty in grasping his plan of procedure. When fully mast red, it had chilling effect upon numerically large section of Ministerial force who want Veto first. Enthusiasm that found vent in mighty cheers when PREMIER rose gradually died away.

On the whole a dispirited opening of what promises to be epoch-making fight.

Business done.—Address moved and seconded.

Tuesday.—House had advantage of assisting at realisation of something approaching debate in Irish Parliament when it shall be re-established on College Green. Full flavour restrained by foreign surroundings. Encircled by cold-blooded Saxons, scene and action lacked the inspiring atmosphere breathed in Dublin. But they served.

WILLIAM O'BRIEN, with his bodyguard of ten bould bhoys, has come to Westminster with avowed intention of wiping the floor of the House of Commons with the limp body of JOHN REDMOND. In PARNELL'S time and later, Irish Nationalists were united in opposition to Government of the day whatever its political colour might be. Now, by comparison with his feelings towards the Redmondites, WILLIAM O'BRIEN almost worships the CHIEF SECRETARY to the LORD LIEUTENANT. The foes of Ireland, he laments, are those of her own household, sons nourished at her bosom. O'BRIEN, after long interval returning to political life, has devoted himself to the task of driving forth the traitors. Brooding over their iniquities, he chants in the ear of Ireland a variant on LOVELACE'S deathless couplet addressed "To Lucasta on going to the Wars": "I could not love thee, Dear, so much, Loathed I not REDMOND more."

Opportunity came to-day in debate on Address. He seized it by the hair, as they say at Boulogne. Lost no time in preamble or parley. Went straight for REDMOND, and (in English Parliamentary sense, of course) got his head in Chancery and punched it with resounding blows. Ferocity of attack rather increased by studious quietude of manner, laboured polish of phrase. From time to time the volcanic emotion that underlay the surface manifested itself in fierce outburst that raised the voice almost to a shriek. Instantly he recovered himself, and succeeding sentences were whispered in a voice so humbly low that it was sometimes difficult to catch all the syllables.

As he went forward the countrymen he denounced sat restless on the two back benches. Only a narrow strip of neutral territory divided them from the accuser. Had the incident happened on College Green, this bench would not long have served as barrier. As things

were, the restraint of place and circumstance was borne with heroic self-control. Once or twice, at some exceptionally vicious assault from the grey-bearded spectacled man on his legs almost within hand-grip, murmured exclamations formed a sort of chorus. For the most part O'BRIEN ignored this commentary. Once he turned round and the mellifluous voice in which he addressed the House suddenly changed to fierce hissing whisper as he enquired,—

"Is there anybody behind me who says different?"

Later, on renewed provocation, he turned again to face the music, with the

pages of the placid *Dod* "A Radical and Home Ruler." He was, in truth, raucous in his Radicalism. The great Liberal upheaval that had just placed GLADSTONE in power was in his opinion nullified by Whiggism prevalent in the Cabinet. He wanted to do away with most things, especially the House of Lords and Royal Palaces.

One day in the spring of the session of 1892 ALPHEUS CLEOPHAS, then in his prime, raised debate in Committee of Supply on expenditure upon the latter. With that largeness of mind, that almost reckless generosity that marks the action of gentlemen dealing with other persons' property, ALPHEUS suggested that Buckingham Palace or Kensington Palace, he really didn't seem to care which, should be set aside for the purposes of a British Gallery of Art. SAM STOREY, stepping in, caused to creep the flesh of hon. and right hon. gentlemen in the quarter of the House where to-night he stands applauded.

"The PRINCE OF WALES and the rest of the Royal Family," he said—and Members at first thought he was going to propose a toast—"are well able to pay for the maintenance of their residences. It is shabby of them not only to occupy their palaces rent free, but to sponge upon the public to keep them in repair."

Twenty-nine years later, SAMUEL, once more called, comes back, as he plaintively says, "too old and too disillusioned ever again to be the strong Party man I once was." So he seats himself among the Elect behind Front Opposition Bench, and, amid continuous cheers from country gentlemen to whose fathers and uncles he was anathema, delivers a strong Protectionist speech.

A strange tendency this on part of extreme Radicals to blossom—or is it to fade?—into ultra-Toryism. Save with stupendous exception of Mr. G., in early manhood the rising hope of stern unbending Toryism, one does not recall a notable parallel case in the other camp. (*Mem.*—Write a treatise on this subject, with photographs, showing eminent Radicals at various stages of their journey to North Pole of Toryism.)

Business done.—Debate on SON AUSTEN'S amendment to Address in favour of Tariff Reform. KETTLE wittily described it as an effort to nail not his colours but his captain to the mast. PRINCE ARTHUR, as usual, fenced with admirable skill. On Division amendment negatived by 285 votes to 254.



A VOLCANO IN SHEEP'S CLOTHING.

"Ferocity of attack rather increased by studious quietude of manner."
(Mr. Wm. O'Brien.)

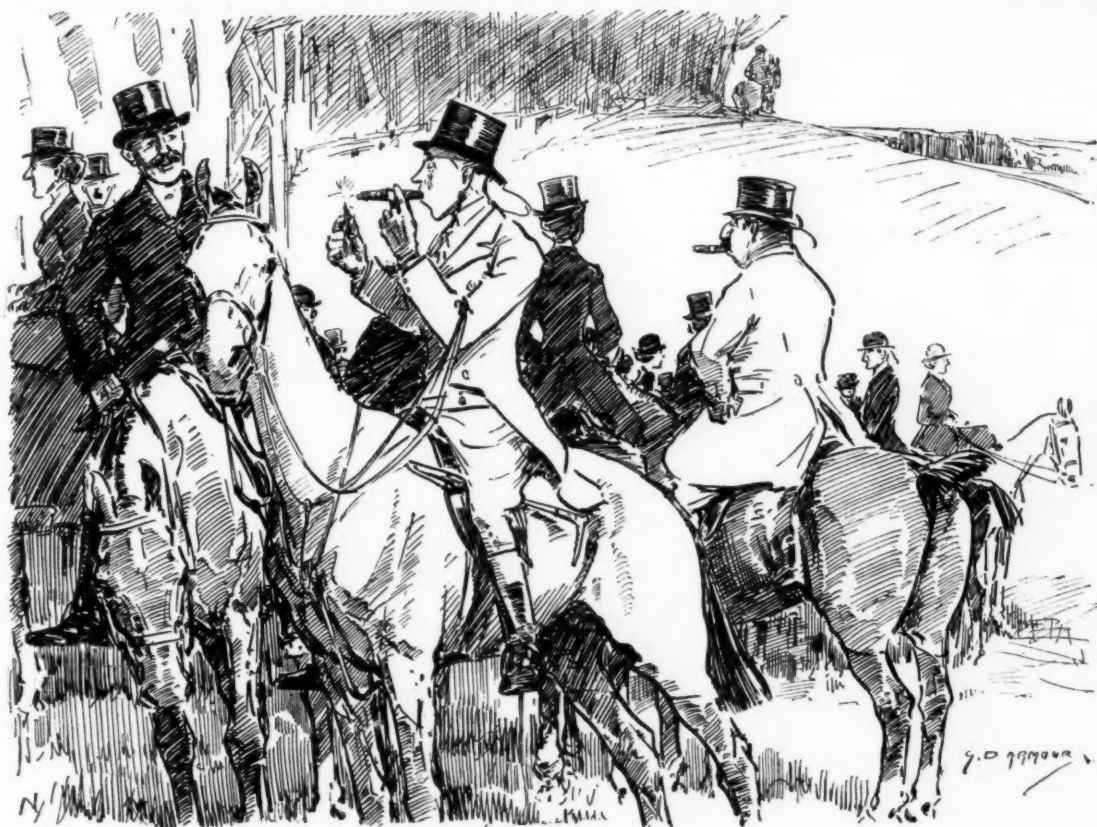
incomplete declaration, "If there is any articulate observation—"

What in such case would follow was left to the imagination. Whatever the threat veiled it succeeded for a time in quelling the growing disturbance on the back benches.

Business done.—Debate on Address continued.

Thursday.—"But that's another STOREY," said the MEMBER FOR SARK, unconsciously quoting familiar phrase reiterated by KIPLING in his early and better days. He was listening to the new Member for Sunderland, who, like bread thrown upon the waters, has returned after many days.

Remember him twenty-nine years ago, when he first appeared on Parliamentary stage, proudly writing himself down in



EMBARRAS DE RICHESSE.

Youth (lighting gorgeous belted cigar, just received from his prospective father-in-law, Mr. Thestyne). "HOPE HOUNDS WON'T FIND AND GO AWAY FROM HERE, BECAUSE I'LL HAVE TO STAY BEHIND AND FINISH THIS. IKE WOULD NEVER FORGIVE ME IF I DIDN'T DO IT JUSTICE."

MODEL ADDRESS FOR AN L.C.C. CANDIDATE.

[Recollect that the mere word "election" fills the voter with nausea, and, in composing your election address, tread lightly.]

LADIES, GENTLEMEN AND WHAT-NOTS,—Here we all are again, faced by another of these tiresome elections. Here am I being polite to you, and promising you all the good things that you can possibly want in this world or the next, on one small condition. Yes, you have guessed right the very first time. It is your vote I want.

I offer myself as your candidate for three reasons. In the first place I want to see for myself what the inside of the L.C. Council Chamber is like. In the second place I want a free pass over all the L.C.C. tramways. In the third place . . . but I have forgotten the third reason. It was, I think, something beginning with an "S," but whether it was Socialism, Steamboats, or 'Stounding 'Stravagance, I cannot say.

I ask you for that which you cannot possibly want for yourself, your vote.

It has been suggested to me that in asking I should give you some inkling of my policy. In the first place I stand here for the sacred principle of building *Dreadnoughts ad libitum*, and making the foreigner pay. One man, one *Dreadnought*; one foreigner, one bill for one-and-a-half million sterling, with five per cent. discount for cash. That is my motto. In the second place I am happy to be able to say that I have made the following statement upon affidavit:—"I, Richard Roe, make oath and say as follows:—To the best of my knowledge and belief I want Tariff Reform. The black bread and dear loaf arguments can be reduced to an absurdity by eating biscuits. I make biscuits.—(Advt.)" But I am told that the L.C.C. concerns itself with neither Tariff Reform nor *Dreadnoughts*. More shame, say I, to the L.C.C. However, as my Agent is looking over my shoulder as I write, I pass on.

He tells me, this Agent, to "come to you on Belgian Tram Rails." I fail to understand him, but I obey. What we want is Belgian Tram Rails and more

Belgian Tram Rails. What we want them for I cannot think, but I am told that you *do* want them, and what you want I want to want. Gentlemen, we will have these rails, even if I have to go on my knees to Mr. GEORGE ALEXANDER himself for them. But I beg your pardon; I am now told that you *do not* want Belgian Tram Rails. Though I should like to see you make up your minds once for all at the start as to what you do want, I confess that I think that your second thoughts are the more sensible. What could you do with a Tram Rail if you had one? It would only fill up your drawing-room, and no one would really think it looked pretty, even though Belgian. I proclaim myself, therefore, an I.A.B.T.R., an Independent Anti-Belgian Tram Railer, and await the favour of your further orders.

I am told that the only other matters of first importance are Education and Sewers. For the present I confine myself to the statement, evolved upon my own authority and upon the inspiration of the moment, that in 1809 the average of our education and sewers

was one per cent.; to-day it is cent. per one. For the rest I will do myself the honour of calling upon you personally and chatting about these things when I have found out something about them. May I take this opportunity of warning that what, on my part, would be an act of courtesy in personally visiting you will, on the part of my opponent, be gross intimidation? When therefore he calls and tells you that he wants a Belgian Tram Rail, say to him, "We have given you education. We have given you a sewer. Now you want a tram rail. I conceive" (*ironically*) "that a man of your extensive claims can have no use for my poor little vote. I shall thus have much pleasure in giving it to your opponent" (*me*).

I should like to have concluded this address by telling you to which party, Moderate or Progressive, I belong. Unfortunately my Agent has this moment left the room. A rough-looking gentleman, one of our workers, at present engaged in licking envelopes, tells me that he suspects from the colour of our posters that I am a Moderate. But I do not trust or ask you to trust this man, suspecting as I do that under cover of his employment he is making a free meal off gum for which I have paid, and wilfully engendering in himself a thirst which it will be my inevitable privilege to assuage.

Thus, when my opponent with great pomp and to-do proclaims that he is a member of this or that party, I shall preserve a discreet silence. But, gentlemen, I can do better than he. I can and do, in the blessed absence of my Agent, say that I will attach myself to whichever party you prefer. Could anything be fairer than that? Can you, in the face of that manly offer, go and elect my opponent who entertains biased and partisan opinions on these matters, which he is determined to thrust down your throats if he can? No. Don't be bullied, gentlemen. Choose your own municipal politics, tell me what they are as briefly as you can, and I will represent them for you, whether I understand them or no.

On one thing only have I an opinion which cannot be altered or improved. I am strongly and unswervingly in favour of myself. I hope you will all be. If you are, poll early and poll often.

Your humble servant, RICHARD ROE.

The Decline of the Press.

From a poster of the day after the division on the Tariff Reform Amendment:—

DAILY MAIL.
LARGEST CIRCULATION.

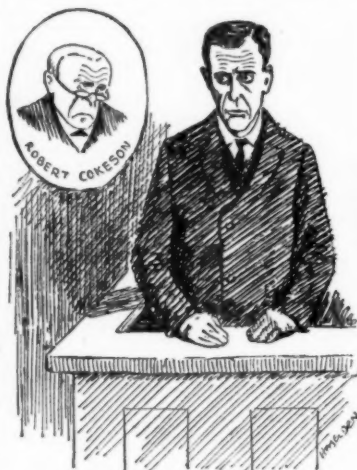
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AT THE PLAY.

"JUSTICE."

If any alien accuses our nation of having ceased to take its pleasures sadly, let him go, on three consecutive nights, and assist at *Elektra*, *Jekyll-Hyde*, and *Justice*, and he will be bound to withdraw that cruel charge. I try to think how Mr. FROHMAN (which, being interpreted, is Mr. Merryman) was ever persuaded to start his Repertory scheme with so gloomy a play as that of Mr. GALSWORDY. "This will test my public," he must have said. "If they can stand this, they can stand anything. Let *Justice* be played, though the gallery-gods should fall on us." *Fiat*, in fact, *Justitia*; *ruat cælum*.

One shrinks, of course, from ribaldry on so awesome a theme. Yet I confess



HIS BRIGHT SMILE HAUNTS ME STILL.

William Falder (Mr. DENNIS EADIE) informs Counsel that he could remember nothing of the period of his temporary aberration except that he "thought of Cokeson's face."

Inset—Cokeson's face (Mr. EDMUND GWENN).

to a certain resentment at being treated like a child that has no imagination and needs an easy object-lesson to be put before his eyes. Mr. GALSWORDY will argue that, if he sent a letter to *The Times* urging that crime on the part of a neurotic should be treated as a disease, and that solitary confinement is brutalising, no one would pay any attention to him. But let him illustrate his views on the stage with a concrete instance, and we shall be staggered. Well, I grant that the stage is the place for exposing moral abuses and social scandals which might otherwise escape our notice. It gives us a new perspective: we learn to see ourselves. But it is different with those conditions in our public life, well-known and admitted, which have already engaged the earnest attention of specialists not less wise or

sincere than the playwright himself. The nicely-balanced arguments which have determined their choice of the least of many evils are unsuited to a form of art whose first business is not with abstract Truth but with the emotions of an audience. Mr. GALSWORDY knows all this, and so he flings the plain pitiful facts at us, as if they were the sole and unanswerable argument.

It seems that such a question as the law's hopeless lack of elasticity in dealing with individual cases requires a more adaptable medium for its presentation. ROBERT BROWNING (though he would not have hesitated to argue on both sides in any medium) recognised this in his treatment of the case of *Caponsacchi*, a case not so very unlike that of Mr. GALSWORDY's *William Falder*, for the Court of Judgment in each instance declined to accept the plea that the prisoner had been tempted by the need of saving a helpless woman from the brutality of her husband.

All the same, Mr. GALSWORDY has come near to justifying himself of his *Justice*, because he has done his best to avoid special pleading, except, of course, where it was to be expected—in the speech of the Counsel for the defence. And even here he admits that there might well be abuses of the clemency of the law. It would never do for a man to be able to excuse himself for having committed murder on the ground that he was not feeling quite well at the time—was, in fact, a bit below himself. But a kind of special pleading was shown in his particular selection of the circumstances which provoked the crime and made a contributory appeal to our pity.

And I noticed, too, that the worst case of inhumanity, not here the fault of the law's machinery, but of men's hearts, was almost ignored. *Falder*, coming out of prison, gets a chance in a new situation. It was the cruelty of his fellow-clerks, when they discovered his history, that ruined his chance of redemption. Much, and to much purpose, might have been said of the need for that charity which covers up the past, but it would not have suited the author's book, and so he let pass the very theme on which he could have done most service. But this is not to suspect his sincerity, which was manifest.

The play was admirably put on; and the performance throughout showed the fine restraint of which the author set so excellent an example. The trial was perhaps a little protracted, and the scene in the cell hardly conveyed the actual horrors of solitary confinement. This was in part because we had seen and heard a good deal about them already from the outside; in part



Student of Politics. "AND WHAT BE REELY THIS YERE COALITION THEY DO BE TARKING ABOUT?"
Oldest Living Local Authority. "WELL, IT'S LIKE THIS. SOME PARTIES SAYS THIS, AN' SOME SAYS THAT AN' T'OTHER. BUT WHAT I SAYS, THERE'S NO KNOWINS NOR NO TELLINS, AN'—MARK MY WORDS! I BAIN'T FUR WRONG."

because it was hard to persuade oneself that the prisoner could not easily have walked out over the footlights if he had only thought of it.

The play held the house, though I confess to having been a little tired of too much *Cokeson*. And this was strange, for he was the comic relief. Anyhow, I sympathised with the prisoner, who declared that he could recall nothing of the period of his temporary aberration except the fact that "he thought of *Cokeson's* face." This was put forward as a point in his favour, since it argued that he could not have been responsible for his actions at the time.

A word about the costumes; though the play perhaps hardly lent itself to quite the smartest sartorial effects. Still, *Mr. Walter How's* silk hat was a good model, and *Mr. James How's* frock-coat in the last Act hung well on him; but the attachment of his eye-glass should have been an invisible cord. Silk has an air of affectation. *Cokeson's* office coat (these should always be loosely cut) was serviceable, and the judge's scarlet and ermine (each in just the right *nuance*) made a happy contrast with the sombre hues of counsel's robes. The detective's lounge suit was not in perfect style, but well enough adapted to his station. On the other hand, a Norfolk jacket for a prison chaplain is in bad taste. O. S.

"THE TENTH MAN."

More politics—this time at the Globe. *George Winter*, financier and scoundrel, is the Liberal Member for Middlepool. The Liberal Government has been in power for six years, and is now going to appeal to the country on (Help!) the question of Conscription. The contest is expected to be very close, so that every seat is of importance. Apart from that, his own seat is naturally of some importance to *Winter*, guileless speculators being more ready to trust their money to one who can sign himself M.P.

Now *Mrs. Winter* is about to divorce her husband, and a divorced man is no sort of candidate for Nonconformist Middlepool. At all costs she must be prevented from bringing the action before the election. *Winter* accordingly threatens to counter-petition. His wife has indiscreetly visited Venice and other places contemporaneously with that rising Under-Secretary, *Mr. Robert Colby*; and, though *Winter* knows their relations are innocent, he points out that the mere fact of being "cited" in the case will ruin *Colby's* chances of Cabinet rank. To save her lover *Mrs. Winter* withdraws, assuring the leading Liberal lights of Middlepool that she is on the best of terms with her husband.

But *Winter* has forgotten the "tenth man." Nine men, we are told, can be bribed or flattered, but the tenth is

honest. *James Ford* is the tenth, and he has discovered the truth about one of *Winter's* companies. Nothing can move him. At the moment of the Liberal victory at Middlepool he announces his intention of going to Scotland Yard. The financier tries all his blandishments in vain . . . and then poisons himself. The first by-election! (Another is imminent, because *Mr. Colby* has been promised the War Secretaryship).

There is really more finance than politics in the play, but I have dwelt chiefly on the political *motif*—partly because I have no head for finance, and should get it all wrong if I tried to describe it, partly because politics on the stage always make themselves felt so enormously. In this case they give an undue appearance of theatricality to the play. *Mr. Somerset Maugham* does not seem to have taken any trouble to make them real, and *The Tenth Man* suffers in consequence. Yet it is an interesting play, well handled, and containing one or two excellent characters. *Mr. Bouchier* as *George Winter* was magnificent; he had a part which suited him perfectly. *Mr. Edmund Maurice* as a noble director was also very good, and *Mr. Holmes-Gore* nearly made me believe he was the Prime Minister. But I am afraid I had no confidence at all in *Mr. Godfrey Tearle* as the rising hope of Liberalism. M.

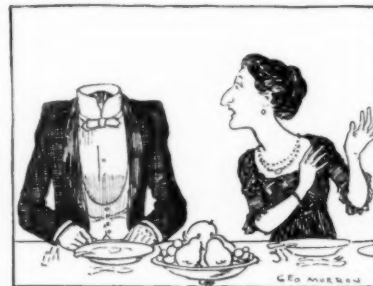
OUR BOOKING-OFFICE.

(By Mr. Punch's Staff of Learned Clerks.)

MR. DESMOND COKE has assured me (on the title-page) that his last book, *Beauty for Ashes* (CHAPMAN AND HALL), is a comedy of caste, and I should like to believe him; but, in all the "comedies" I know, the hero and heroine, whenever the author has encouraged us to like them, are left to get married at the fall of the curtain; and, if a novelist is superior to the playwright's conventional endings, he should also, I think, dispense with the playwright's terminology. *Humphrey Scott-Mahon*, who prided himself on being an individualist, left Burcot Priory, where he was in the position of steward to his father's impoverished estate, and after some vicissitudes, admirably reported, succeeded in making a boy's club in the East End "go." Incidentally he became engaged to a fellow-worker, but realised that he wasn't genuinely in love with her at about the same time that she discovered her heart to have been all along in the possession of a former admirer. (And this on page 300 out of 330!) So *Humphrey* returned to "the county" and a possible marriage with a very shallow *poseuse* (if there are *poseuses*), having heard the West—or, at any rate, the aristocracy—a-calling. Now if

were I could take you across the hog-backed bridge between them straight up Whispering Street till we came to the House of Blind Fortunes. But as I don't know where in the South country the twin towns are, and as it all happened two hundred years ago, I can only tell you that it makes a pretty picture in my mind, and that because I like it I can almost believe that I am still young and unsophisticated.

Of them that write "mystery" novels, some, determined to work a good mystery off their chests, use the novel as a mere medium; others, bent on writing a good novel, invent a mystery solely as an excuse for so doing. Judged by the far-fetched nature of his plot and the title of his book, *Why Did He Do It?* (METHUEN), Mr. BERNARD CAPES is of the latter class. "He" is *Professor Urchin*, head of the archaeological department of a London Co-operative Stores. "It" is an act of treachery by which the practical joke of his bobbish young friend, *Mandrake*, is allowed to be taken for an attempted theft and discussed in a police court as such. The problem is set in the three first and solved in the three last chapters, and those six seemed to me the only dull ones in the book. I found so much more pleasure in the behaviour of the minor characters than in the progress of the main theme that, when they became obsessed with the duty of being mysterious and



THE "TORTOISE" COSTUME FOR BASHFUL DINERS.

"Oh, Mr. Smith, do you believe in PLATONIC LOVE? I'M DYING TO KNOW YOUR OPINION."

Humphrey had been a bit more of a prig, or if *Rosa* had been more obviously middle-class (it didn't come out very plainly until after they were engaged), or if the lady at home had been even faintly attractive, I should have felt happier, but as it was I had, I suppose, to laugh "sardonically," and that is so difficult to do outside a *feuilleton*. As usual, the author has dissected his characters' brains beautifully and has delightful flashes of humour; but in romance I am an iron sentimentalist, and, unless there is a suitable princess in the background, shall justify *King Cophetua* every time.

It is a refreshing change from the reek of motor omnibuses and problem novels to the early eighteenth-century repose of *Cousin Hugh* (METHUEN), by "THEO DOUGLAS." Not that there is any lack of incident in Mrs. H. D. EVERETT's pleasantly-written story. It is a tale of treason and mystery, of the surreptitious barter of French prisoners for counterfeit coin and real old lace and brandy, of sleep-walking and sudden death, of ghost-impersonation and amateur burglary, all deftly woven together to form the background of a pretty old-world love story, which ends as all love stories should. Mrs. EVERETT has a happy knack of making her places and people real. I know just what *Hugh* looked like, and kind *Dr. Flectwood* and his rascally half-brother, and selfish old *Lady Marrable*, and sweet *Alice North*, and I know just how the river flowed past the Red Deeps, and if only I knew where red-roofed Loxhall and its twin-town Loxleigh

paused to ask each other and them-selves from time to time "Why did he do it?" I felt more irritated than intrigued. Even the ultimate solution, though it involved the Philosopher's Stone and the Tree of Knowledge itself, left me comparatively cold. However, without the mystery we should not have had the novel, and I would have put up with a much worse plot rather than be deprived of so entertaining a story. Had one found the style of its telling less attractive and unusual, one might have been more excited about getting to the end of it.

In *Wrack* (from DUCKWORTH; MAURICE DRAKE)—

Note, by the way, the subtle art
Of Drake and Duck—there's no mistake
About the ships and shipping part;
Stokeholds and engine-rooms and such
Are open books to MAURICE D.,
And I am bound to say his touch
Has made them quite appeal to me.
Afloat, his writing gets a grip;
You feel the spray across your cheek;
But when the hero leaves his ship
The salt's unsavoury, so to speak;
The strenuous life aside he flings;
He finds a faithless girl to woo,
He writes, he's made M.P.—all things
Which almost anyone could do.